

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

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Purpose

To establish a Board of Supervisors policy relating to the acceptance of donations of personal property exceeding the threshold value specified in the Administrative Code.

Background

From time to time civic-minded citizens, service groups and businesses offer gifts and donations to the County. In these times of great fiscal constraint, such gifts and donations can help expand important services and programs that the County can provide to the Community. These gifts and donations take many forms including cash with or without a designated purpose, or new or used equipment. The decision to accept these offers rests with department heads when the value is below the threshold value. The Board of Supervisors must ratify all gifts that exceed the threshold value, in accordance with County Administrative Code Section 66, ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.

There are currently no guidelines for the Chief Administrative Officer to follow when deciding which gifts and donations should be recommended to the Board of Supervisors for ratification. In order for the County to work in mutual understanding and cooperation with the community in accepting gifts and donations, consistent policy guidelines are needed.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that recommendations to ratify acceptance of gifts and donations (in accordance with County Administrative Code Section 66) be prepared by the Chief Administrative Officer in accordance with the following policy guidelines:

1. Acceptance of the gift or donation shall result in a clear benefit, and be consistent with priorities, goals and operational limitations of the County.
2. Acceptance of the gift or donation shall not be automatically construed to result in publicity, advertisement, or promotional use. Any decision to publicize the donation shall be examined on the individual circumstance. The determination to publicize will be made by the Chief Administrative Officer in consultation with the Board of Supervisors where appropriate.
3. Acceptance of the gift or donation will in no way infringe on the County's commitment to competitive procurement of current or future goods and services nor cause a competitive advantage to accrue to the donor.

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4. As appropriate the Chief Administrative Officer's recommendation to ratify acceptance shall disclose relevant information such as:

- a. costs of shipping, delivery, installation, maintenance and training;
- b. compatibility with existing equipment and performance standards; and
- c. fiscal impacts on other County departments and offices that may result from receipt of the donation.

5. The Chief Administrative Officer shall screen donation proposals for potential conflicts of interest and negative publicity possibilities.

6. The department that receives the gift shall prepare a letter acknowledging receipt of the gift and expressing gratitude on behalf of the Board of Supervisors and the County of San Diego. The letter should be prepared for review by the Chief Administrative Officer and the signature of the Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

7. In the event that the County or any of the County's non-profit entities incurs underwriting services, and the underwriters desire to host a closing dinner, County officials will request that a contribution to a local charity be made in lieu of the dinner. Preferred beneficiaries are the Children's Investment Trust Fund, the County Library Book Fund, and the Polinsky Children's Center.

8. Gifts, donations, or contributions, whether in-kind or cash, that are provided to the County in support of Community Outreach Events such as the annual "State of the County" address, Regional State of the County addresses, Town Hall meetings and similar events shall be used exclusively to support the activities and functions associated with the event. Such gifts, donations, and contributions are approved and accepted, subject to the Chief Financial Officer's deposit of cash contributions in a trust account which is established for the purpose of funding costs arising from the activities and functions associated with the event.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-08.

Board Action

7-24-90 (40)

1-21-97 (16)

1-28-03 (16)

CAO Reference

1.Chief Financial Officer/Auditor and Controller